



CDR Sam Pennington, USN
Executive Officer
Air Test and Evaluation Squadron TWO THREE

Commander Pennington was raised in Hamilton, Ohio and was commissioned through the NROTC program at the University of Notre Dame in May 1994. He graduated with a B.S. in Civil Engineering, earned his wings of gold in 1997, and completed training at VFA-106 in the F/A-18 Hornet. In 1998, he began a three-year operational tour with the VFA-105 "Gunslingers" and relocated with the squadron from Cecil Field, FL to Oceana, VA. He made two deployments to the Mediterranean Sea and Persian Gulf and flew combat missions from the USS ENTERPRISE (CVN-65) and the USS HARRY S. TRUMAN (CVN-75) in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH and Operation DESERT FOX.

In 2001, he attended the Defense Language Institute in Monterey California, and then completed a three year tour as F/A-18 Instructor Pilot / Training Officer with the Spanish Air Force in Zaragoza, Spain. From there, he served three years as Department Head with the VFA-115 "Eagles" in Lemoore, California. He deployed twice onboard the USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN-76) and flew missions in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

In July 2007, CDR Pennington reported to 1st Air Force / Air Forces Northern (AFNORTH) / Continental NORAD Region (CONR), the Air Force service component to U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. He supported air defense of the U.S. under Operation NOBLE EAGLE and defense humanitarian assistance operations. In 2010, he was selected for Aerospace Engineering Duty Officer (AEDO) and reported to the Aviation Training Systems Program Office (PMA-205) as the Tactical Training Range Systems Team Lead. He earned an MBA from TUI University and attained Defense Acquisition Level III certification in Program Management.

In June 2012, Commander Pennington reported as the Executive Officer to the VX-23 "Salty Dogs" in Patuxent River, MD. He has logged 2,500 hours in Naval Aircraft, 200 combat hours and 389 carrier landings. His awards include the Defense and Meritorious Service Medals, Aerial Achievement Medals, Navy Commendation Medals with combat "V", and the Navy Achievement Medal.